

Minutes of Barnwell County School District Board of Trustees
Work Session
February 25, 2025
(770 Hagood Avenue, Barnwell, South Carolina 29812)

Board Members Present: Becky Huggins, Felicia Devore, Rosey Anderson, Catrena Hughes-Parker, John Melton

I. Opening Business

A. Call to Order, Reflection, Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag, FOI Notice

Chair Becky Huggins called the meeting to order at 8:13 am. Chair Huggins led the Reflection, and Chair Huggins led the Pledge of Allegiance.

Chair Huggins confirmed with Dr. Stapleton the media was notified.

B. Approval of Agenda – Chair Huggins

A motion was made by Mrs. Rosey Anderson to approve the agenda as presented. The motion was seconded by Mrs. Catrena Hughes-Parker. Hearing no objections, the agenda was unanimously approved.

II. Information Items

A. Review of Consolidation Plan and Facility Plan for New Board Members

Dr. Stapleton began the update on the FEMA Safe Room/Gymnasium project.

The Board of Trustees had a break at 8:20am as the auditor connected to present virtually regarding the audits.

B. Presentation of the Barnwell School District 45, Barnwell School District 48, and Barnwell County Career Center Audits for Information

Auditor David Enzastiga joined the group virtually. He presented Barnwell School District 45 and Barnwell School District 48's audits.

CFO Holly Hutto present an overview of Barnwell County Career Center's audit.

Highlights included:

The final audits for Barnwell School District 45, Barnwell County Consolidated School District (Williston/Blackville), and Barnwell County Career Center, were presented to the Barnwell County School District Board of Trustees during their Board Workshop on February 25, 2025. BSD45 and BCCSD (Williston/Blackville) audits were presented to the board by David Enzastiga with Rish & Enzastiga and the Chief Financial Officer

Holly Hutto shared the Career Center audit performed by Rod Dooley with Dooley and Company. Each district received an unmodified audit, which is the best audit result that you can receive. During the Board Meeting on February 25, 2025, the audits for the FY 2023-2024 were received by the board as information after a recap was given by Holly Hutto.

Barnwell School District 45 and Barnwell County Career Center showed no financial statement findings. Barnwell County Consolidated School District (Williston/Blackville) was cited for four items. These citations were that the board approved balanced budget was not loaded into the general ledger software, the bank accounts were not reconciled in a timely manner, the ending balances from 22-23 were not rolled over as the beginning 23-24 balances, and grant reimbursement claims needed to be made more consistently. These items were discovered during the audit process and they were rectified with the Finance team that is currently in place at Barnwell County School District. Mr. Enzastiga assured the board that, with the transition to the new district, there was a strong financial standing of all the combined Districts. Also, because the findings from Barnwell County Consolidated School District (Williston/Blackville) were addressed, he feels that these findings are not representative of the new school district.

At the close of all three former districts in Barnwell County on June 30, 2024, the financial standing of each district was strong. As David Enzastiga told the board Tuesday in the work session, this strong financial position puts the new district, Barnwell County School District, at a great starting point. The ending fund balances were \$1,324,694 for the Barnwell County Career Center, \$9,687,632 for Barnwell School District 45 and \$10,166,146 for Barnwell County Consolidated School District (Williston/Blackville).

- C. Discussion of FEMA Safe Room and Gymnasium Project (focus on interior design)
- The Superintendent and Board discussed the interior design options for the FEMA Safe Room and Gymnasium as provided by Tetra Tech, following multiple meetings with the district team that meets regularly with FEMA. They also reviewed physical samples of interior finishings.
 - The Board of Trustees returned to the “Review of the Facility Plan” (II.A.), as it had been interrupted prior to the auditor joining the Board virtually.
 - Superintendent Stapleton and Chair Huggins shared information from the Colorado trip when they visited CTE-focused schools. Dr. Stapleton also shared a video from one of the schools the team visited.
 - The Board and Superintendent road the minibus to the visit the sites being reviewed by OSF for the new high school. (Note: J. Melton had to leave for a brief time and was not on the tour of the sites.)
- D. Discussion of District Updates (Lunch was served and eaten during the District Updates portion of the meeting.)

Dr. Stapleton presented Information regarding the following district updates.

- Home Visiting Update regarding the State's \$250,000 Investment in Early Childhood in Barnwell County
- Turnaround Plans and Math Palmetto Project: Macedonia Elementary/Middle School and Guinyard-Butler Middle School

III. Adjournment

A. Meeting Adjournment

Mrs. Rosey Anderson made a motion to adjourn at 12:18pm. The motion was seconded by Mrs. Felicia Devore. There were no objections to adjourning.

The board members then left to go to the FEMA Safe Room and Gymnasium Groundbreaking at Barnwell High School, which was scheduled to begin at 1pm.

Chair

Bobby W. Higgins

Clerk

Rosey Anderson